

War without a shot being fired; unifying Germany when most of Europe, as the Soviet Union fell and the Berlin Wall fell after Reagan's famous "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall"—the wall didn't actually come down at that moment; it came down during the Bush administration, as they led Germany out of that and then into unification, even though most of Europe did not want a unified Germany, remembering still what a unified Germany did during World War II. He led through that.

He led, as President, Americans to start thinking about other Americans in a new way, to stop saying so much that the government should provide for every issue, though the government has a role. But he pushed back on something he called the "thousand points of light" and challenged Americans to take care of their neighbors in their neighborhoods and for us not to look toward Washington, DC, to solve each problem but for nonprofits and communities and churches and the engagement of neighbor to neighbor to be able to turn around a nation. It was a remarkable calling for us to be called to each other.

In 1992, he lost his bid for reelection. But it is interesting that in his speech, just after he lost the election, he made this statement:

I hope history will record that the Bush administration has served America well. I am proud of my Cabinet and my staff. America has led the world through an age of global transition; we've made the world safer for our kids. And I believe the real fruits of our global victory are yet to be tasted.

If he were seated here today, I would tell him: We are still tasting the fruits of that freedom.

He made this statement, as well, at the same time:

Ours is a nation that has shed the blood of war and cried the tears of depression. We have stretched the limits of human imagination and seen the technologically miraculous become almost mundane. Always, always, our advantage has been our spirit, a constant confidence, a sense that in America the only things not yet accomplished are the things that have not yet been tried.

Then he said this:

President-elect Clinton needs all Americans to unite behind him so he can move our nation forward. But, more than that, he will need to draw upon this unique American spirit.

Multiple individuals have recently referenced the letter that President Bush left for President Clinton on the desk in the Oval Office so that when the transition occurred, President Clinton would walk into his new office in 1993 and see this letter that ends with this statement, dated January 20, 1993. It is a long note, but it ends with this handwritten statement:

You will be our President when you read this note.

And he underlined the word "our."

I wish you well. I wish your family well.

Your success is now our country's success. I am rooting hard for you.

That is a pretty remarkable statement for someone who had just been

beaten in the campaign to then turn as an American leader and say: America still continues, and we are rooting for your success.

He left office and continued to serve, continued to press the "thousand points of light," continued to encourage people to serve their neighbors and to serve each other, and he continued to love his beautiful Barbara.

He celebrated watching his kids get elected to office, including President of the United States, but he continued to be who he was—a gentle, compassionate, faith-filled person, who wanted the best for our Nation.

He showed us how to lose gracefully and not make enemies of our adversaries, and he turned political foes into lasting friends. Interestingly enough, on June 12 of this year, on his 94th birthday, he wrote a note again to some friends. In that note he wrote earlier this year, he said:

I am truly touched and overwhelmed by all the messages I have received today. And although I have seen them all, I can no longer answer them all. My 94-year-old hands would rebel. Just know I appreciated hearing from you. As many of you know, for years I have said the three most important things in life are faith, family, and friends. My faith has never been stronger. I am blessed with the world's most loving family. And thanks to you, I feel the love of the best friends a man ever had. My heart is full on this first day of my 95th year.

As I walked out of the funeral yesterday, I turned to the person next to me and said: I think that is the first political funeral or event I have ever been to where I have been able to honor a life where Jesus got equal time.

At a lot of funerals, it is all about them. President Bush shaped a funeral where it was as much about his relationship with God as it was about his history and legacy. It is a remarkable reminder of a man who prioritized, as he said, his faith, his family, and his friends, and it sets an example for the Nation.

He was around Oklahoma a lot, as well. He popped in and out. He spoke at Oklahoma State University at graduation while he was President. In fact, he made a famous comment about stopping in at Eskimo Joe's, a local restaurant there, and he endorsed the cheese fries in front of thousands of people and across the Nation.

He stopped in at a different time at Cattlemen's restaurant in Oklahoma City. He popped in and ate a great steak. He said: If you are ever in Oklahoma, stop in at Cattlemen's. Folks at Cattlemen's still talk about the time President Bush showed up and had a steak. He met everybody in the restaurant, and he even went into the kitchen and met all the cooks. The folks still remember it well.

He stopped in at Enid with Don Nickles. In fact, Don Nickles, my predecessor Senator, tells the story that he went to Maine at one point, when he was the whip in the Senate, to have a briefing with President Bush and a small group at his place in Maine.

While he was there, the President offered to take him on a quick boat ride to be able to get over, and President Bush was notorious for his speedboat, in which he put people and just rammed the throttle full speed in take-off, because his boat could go faster than the Secret Service boat that was following them, and he loved to be able to outrun them and take off.

Even after his retirement as President, there is the story from one of our staff members who writes about a friend who was a student at Texas A&M University, where the President had his library. He tells the story of this 20-year-old student named Michael, who is serving as a personal aide to the Bush Foundation and how one day in the morning President Bush walked up to this 20-year-old who was working there and said: Are you hungry?

To which he replied: I am always hungry.

President Bush took him to lunch that day. This was in 2004. The two of them sat, and the President peppered him with questions about his family, about his background, and about his siblings. Michael got to call his family later that day and say: Hey, I just had lunch with the President.

What was interesting is Michael's statement, which was this: President Bush made me feel like I was the President.

May it be said of all of us: No matter what our title is, no matter what our position is, no matter what our place is, at the end of our life, we would still be talking about our faith, our family, and our friends—that for every person around us, we expect compassion and gratitude for them and to set a good example for them. May it be in our political discourse, and may it be in our homes and our communities.

With that, I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF BERNARD L. MCNAMEE

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, President Trump has nominated Bernard McNamee to be a member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, FERC.

FERC is an independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil. FERC also reviews proposals to build liquefied natural gas, LNG, terminals and interstate natural gas pipelines, as well as licensing hydropower projects.

Historically, FERC has been independent and nonpartisan. I am concerned that, if confirmed, Mr. McNamee would threaten the nonpartisan independence of FERC.

Mr. McNamee has a long-standing history of being an opponent of clean energy and led Texas's efforts to challenge the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan.

In remarks before the Texas Public Policy Foundation, TPPF, and sponsored by Koch Industries in February 2018, Mr. McNamee said fossil fuels are

“key to our way of life,” but renewable energy “screws up the whole physics of the grid.” He also portrayed industry lawsuits with environmental groups as a “constant battle between liberty and tyranny.”

While at the Department of Energy, Mr. McNamee was a key player in the agency’s failed attempt to bail out the coal industry and upend wholesale energy markets.

Furthermore, I am very concerned that Mr. McNamee will take us backwards in the fight to combat climate change. Just recently, the Trump administration tried to bury the release of the Fourth National Climate Assessment report and its alarming statistics on the realities of climate change. The report found that annual average temperatures in the United States are projected to continue to increase in the coming decades and that human health and safety, our quality of life, and the rate of economic growth in communities across the U.S. are increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In my home State of Maryland, the report found that one of Maryland’s crown jewels, the Chesapeake Bay, will experience stronger and more frequent storms, an increase in heavy precipitation events, increasing bay water temperatures, and a rise in sea level.

FERC’s independence is critical to its mission, and Mr. McNamee, if confirmed, would be a significant departure from that.

His history as being a supporter of the fossil fuel industry, an opponent of clean energy, and an opponent of progress to combat climate change are alarming. I oppose his nomination to be a member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, FERC.

Mr. LANKFORD. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Bernard L. McNamee, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 30, 2020?

Mr. RISCH. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote.

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 254 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Alexander	Flake	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Perdue
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Capito	Heller	Roberts
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rounds
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Corker	Inhofe	Sasse
Cornyn	Isakson	Scott
Cotton	Johnson	Shelby
Crapo	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cruz	Kyl	Thune
Daines	Lankford	Toomey
Enzi	Lee	Wicker
Ernst	McConnell	Young
Fischer	Moran	

NAYS—49

Baldwin	Hassan	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Sanders
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Brown	Jones	Schumer
Cantwell	Kaine	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Smith
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Udall
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Duckworth	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murray	
Harris	Nelson	

NOT VOTING—1

Tillis

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.J. Res. 143.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 143) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2019, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the joint resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the joint resolution be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. McCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the joint resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 143) was passed.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kathleen Laura Kraninger, of Ohio, to be Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection for a term of five years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, on November 23 of this year, we had release of the Fourth National Climate Assessment, which is required to be released under the Global Change Research Act that was passed by Congress in 1990.

This climate assessment is put together by 300 experts, guided by a 60-member Federal advisory committee, including 13 Federal Agencies. They rely heavily on the panel from the National Academy of Sciences. My point is, this is the best scientific information we have as to the risks of climate change. The Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume 2, was issued on November 23, 2018.

Its conclusions should be sobering to all of us; that humans are responsible for the current climate crisis and that we must take responsibility to minimize future destruction.

Four years earlier, the first volume of the Fourth National Climate Assessment was issued, and its prediction was that we would see increased instances of flooding, wildfires, and higher temperatures. Unfortunately, that has come to pass, as we have experienced this year and in the last several years an unusually large number of flooding episodes, wildfires that we have just experienced, and higher temperatures.

The findings make two critical assertions in regard to how it will affect our lifestyle. First, it said climate change is a growing risk to the danger of human health. By human health danger, you can look at the direct impact of climate change—those whose lives have been forever changed as a result of storms or as a result of flooding or as a result of wildfires or as a result of sea level rising. We know many people have lost their lives, and their lives have been compromised as a result of the reality of the new current weather conditions.

It also affects the safe supply of water—clean drinking water is very much impacted by what is happening with climate change—and sea level rises and the spread of diseases, from people who are suffering from asthma to the spread of West Nile disease, and